

ARLINGTON PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Approved

August 8, 2023

The Town of Arlington Park and Recreation Commission came to order in the main meeting room at the Community Center on Tuesday August 8, 2023 at 7:00pm.

Commission Members: Phil Lasker, Scott Walker, Shirley Canniff (remote), Jen Rothenberg, Lesley Mayer, and Josh Fenollosa. Sarah Carrier was not in attendance. Recreation Director Joseph Connelly was also present. Also in attendance was Conservation Commission liaison Susan Chapnick.

Members of the Public: David Kaplan, Liz Reisberg, Maryanna Foskett, Ruth Esposito

Anticipated Speakers: N/A

Preliminary Matter: Scott Walker, Park & Recreation Commission chair, took formal attendance and welcomed members of the public to the Recreation Commission meeting.

Community Garden Working Group Report

Mr. Connelly and Ms. Mayer reviewed the report of the working group. Mr. Connelly detailed the top two recommendations of McClennen Park Area and Spy Pond at Linwood. The Commission discussed these recommendations. The Commission asked Mr. Connelly to get some preliminary pricing for a pilot program at McClennen Park.

The Commission thanked the working group for all of their efforts,

FY 25 Capital and CPA Discussion

Mr. Connelly and the Commission reviewed their FY 25 Capital and CPA Requests. Mr. Connelly reviewed the Commission's plan as voted August 2022.

Ms. Rothenberg discussed the need for a master plan for fields and playgrounds to identify the true needs of the community. The Commission discussed several reasons why this would benefit long term decision making. Ms. Mayer discussed the commission's historical capital planning process.

The Commission reviewed the draft court assessment concepts with Mr. Connelly prepared by Activitas.

The Commission decided to forgo any major field renovations until a master plan could take place and asked Mr. Connelly to solicit pricing for a capital request.

The Commission discussed the following course of action:

FY 25 Capital

Feasibility Study - \$10,000

ADA Implementation - \$50,000

Playground Inspection and Repairs - \$75,000

Field Master Plan - \$85,000 - Pricing verified by Activitas

Parallel Park - \$500,000- Already in capital plan and we will be starting design this fall

FY 25 CPA

Courts Facility - \$1,000,000 - Crosby

FY 26 Capital

Feasibility Study - \$10,000

ADA Implementation - \$50,000

Playground Inspection and Repairs - \$75,000

Playground Master Plan - \$65,000 -

Thorndike Dog Park - \$300,000 -

FY 27 Capital

Feasibility Study - \$10,000

ADA Implementation - \$50,000

Playground Inspection and Repairs - \$75,000

Buzzell - \$500,000 (Place Holder)

Capital Report

Menotomy and Parallel Design

The Commission reviewed the received RFP's and decided to invite KZLA, Copley, and Stantec to a future meeting for interviews.

Hills Hill MTB Design

Mr. Connelly reviewed the RFP from Weston and Sampson. Mr. Connelly, Mr. Lasker, Mr. Walker, and Mr. Fenollosa did meet with the firm to discuss the scope and pricing.

Robbins Farm Park

Mr. Connelly stated that the bid opening was pushed back to 8/21 due to some necessary last minute changes.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Walker asked to include comments from correspondence received regarding playlocal tennis court booking system.

Mr. Lasker motioned to approve the minutes of July 11, 2023, as amended, seconded by Ms. Rothenberg. Approved 3-0-2. Ms. Mayer and Ms. Canniff abstained from the vote.

Comments and Items for Future Meetings:

Off Leash Request in Menotomy Woods Meeting Review

Mr. Connelly reviewed a meeting held with him and Ms. Canniff and several residents requesting off leash hours in the Menotomy Woods during off leash park hours. Mr. Connelly stated the meeting was productive and the group discussed:

History of Off Leash Hours at Menotomy
Current demand for hours in the woods
Enforcement
Need for up to date Data

The Commission discussed these issues with those in attendance. Ms. Reisberg and Mr. Kaplan expressed the need of fellow residents and that there was no data supporting resident's safety concerns. The Commission expressed concern of the best approach to gathering accurate data and the method of which data would be secured and by whom.

Mr. Walker expressed concern over getting accurate data from those who are not using the park currently due to the off leash dog issues. Mr. Lasker also expressed concern over getting data from those who do not have cell phones if data was to be collected via QR code.

Mr. Kaplan and Ms. Esposito expressed concern over not having shared use of portions of the park where their dogs wanted to go. The Commission discussed the current boundaries of the off leash program and their concern with limiting use in the park for just off leash activity during those times.

Mr. Connelly stated that he understood that policies should be revisited periodically and that after 13 years it made sense to do so. Mr. Connelly and the Commission had reservations about rewarding those who purposely disobeyed the current rules by expanding the off leash program. The Commission and the members of the public discussed this issue.

Ms. Chapnick raised concern regarding dog waste run off into the pond due and believes that the environmental impact should also be considered with any policy revision.

The Commission stated that the policy should be reviewed as a whole so that decisions can be made with all the information available and decisions can be made for the betterment of the entire off leash program not just one particular park in the program. This is something that Ms. Chapnick agreed with.

The Commission thanked those who came and participated in the discussion which will continue as an agenda item at a future meeting.

Correspondence Received:

Correspondence received was reviewed as part of the previous discussion.

New Business:

Ms. Rothenberg asked Mr. Connelly to review the success of the reservoir beach this summer. Mr. Connelly reviewed the attendance for the weekly special events and he publicly thanked the reservoir beach staff for all of their hard work and dedication.

Open Forum: N/A

Mr. Lasker motioned to adjourn at 9:55pm, seconded by Ms. Rothenberg. Approved 5-0.

The Arlington Park & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes were respectfully submitted by Joseph Connelly.